



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
AND  
PRIVACY ACTS

SUBJECT Dorothea Lange



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

FORM No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT

SAN FRANCISCO

FILE NO.

REPORT MADE AT SAN FRANCISCO	DATE WHEN MADE MAR 27 1953	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 1/23, 29, 11, 13, 16, 19, 24-27; 3/2, 4, 10, 11, 18/53	REPORT MADE BY [REDACTED] dl
TITLE [REDACTED]			CHARACTER OF CASE ESPIONAGE - R INTERNAL SECURITY ACT, 1950

## SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

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Acquaintance met the [REDACTED] in 1936 but did not know them as CP members. Another acquaintance knew the [REDACTED] as CP members in middle 1930's, due to association and activities, but did not know specific CP unit to which they belonged. Other acquaintances interviewed; not aware of CP sympathy on the part of the [REDACTED]

-P-

DETAILS:

Unless otherwise noted, all informants mentioned herein are of known reliability.

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ON 10/8/93 # 393,317~~SECURITY INFORMATION - CONFIDENTIAL~~

APPROVED AND FORWARDED [REDACTED]	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE [REDACTED]	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES 100-46295-191 APR 3 1953 [REDACTED]	INDEXED-128 RECORDED-138
COPY IN FILE 6 - Bureau (100-46295) (Registered) 1 - INS, San Francisco (Registered) 2 - Los Angeles (65-4879) (Registered) 2 - St. Louis (65-1657) (Registered) 2 - New York (100-376) (Registered) 2 - Memphis (Encls.) (Registered) 2 - Washington Field (65-5222) (Registered) 3 - San Francisco (65-2427)			

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SF 65-2427

SF 65-4387

CALIF.

[redacted] San Francisco, advised that she met [redacted] early in 1936 when they were residing [redacted]

[redacted] She stated that her line of interest in photography was in portraiture, while theirs was more in social or documentary photography.

b7C

b7D

[redacted] advised that she was not particularly interested in politics or social causes and could furnish little information as to the [redacted] attitude along these lines. [redacted] recalled the following persons as among those known by her to be acquaintances of the [redacted]

CALIF.

WILLIAM ABBENSETH, 73 Telegraph Place, photographer, employed on a WPA project at one time, photographed San Francisco houses and recently lived in New York for several years.

[redacted] who lived near the [redacted] in the middle 1930's.

b7C

DOROTHEA LANGE-TAYLOR, Documentary Photographer.

[redacted] Photographer.

RE: WILLIAM H. ABBENSETH, JR. CALIF.

A report of the San Francisco Retailers' Credit Association dated December 11, 1939, concerning ABBENSETH, then age forty-fifty, reflects that he was then assistant supervisor, Art Project Department, WPA, 42nd and Judah, San Francisco, and had been employed there four years.

CALIF.

His wife's name was given as MARGARET and it was noted that a marriage license had been issued August 3, 1931 to WILLIAM HENRY ABBENSETH, JR. and MARGARET MOORE, place and date of marriage not shown. He was divorced from his first wife, ELLIEN ABBENSETH. Instant report reflected their current address as 1865 Vallejo Street, San Francisco, with previous addresses at 305A Filbert Street; 1218 Montgomery Street; and 1355 Taylor Street, all San Francisco, as well as 14 Ponlo Park, Berkeley, California. It was stated that ABBENSETH and wife were living with his mother at the current address.

SF 65-2127  
SF 65-1387

[redacted] married [redacted] She was born [redacted] according to Immigration and Naturalization Service records. *CH-11*

San Francisco [redacted] advised in December, 1943, that [redacted] and his wife, known as [redacted] were members of the North Beach Club of the Communist Party in San Francisco. *AL 25*

The Communist Party has been cited by the Attorney General as a subversive organization which seeks to alter the form of Government of the United States by un-Constitutional means.

A report of the San Francisco Retailers' Credit Association dated July 13, 1949, reflects that [redacted]

RE: MRS. DOROTHEA LANGE TAYLOR

Mrs. TAYLOR was born May 26, 1895 at Hoboken, New Jersey, and is presently the wife of Professor PAUL SCHUSTER TAYLOR, Chairman of the Department of Economics, University of California (U.C.) at Berkeley. *4/17/50*

The U.C. Index of Publications written by faculty members, reflects that Professor TAYLOR has published material dealing with seamen's labor matters on the Pacific Coast, the problems of farm laborers, and of Mexican migratory farm laborers.

[redacted] Berkeley, has advised that he believed that Mrs. TAYLOR illustrated some of the publications of Professor TAYLOR and expressed the personal opinion that these were "propaganda photographs in that by adroit use of lighting, composition, and subject matter, Mrs. TAYLOR had conveyed a very dismal and depressing view of exploitation of migratory laborers by large and wealthy agricultural interests."

The records of the Alameda County Retailers' Credit Association reflect that DOROTHEA LANGE was a Government photographer in 1939.

When interviewed by the FBI in February, 1942, [redacted] mentioned Professor and Mrs. TAYLOR as among their few acquaintances.

SF 65-2427  
SF 65-4387

(ALIF)

this publication due to certain disagreements over its contents. SF [redacted] stated that HARRY LUNDBERG of the Sailors Union of the Pacific (SUP), did not feel that the SUP was getting enough coverage.

b2  
b7C  
b7D

[redacted] advised that he had been acquainted with [redacted] (mentioned above) and his wife and [redacted] and believed them to be Party members in the same manner in which he believed the [redacted] to be Party members. He stated that he did not know whether the [redacted] were acquainted with [redacted]. He pointed out that [redacted] had been the [redacted] so that it would appear logical that he would be acquainted with photographers interested in Communist activities.

[redacted] remembered meeting [redacted] who resided on [redacted] San Francisco at one time, and [redacted] a photographer, at a dance sponsored by the American Russian Institute and held in a hall located in the 1800 block of California Street between Polk and Van Ness, sometime in the middle 1930's. He stated that he did not know whether they were acquainted with the [redacted]

[redacted] recalled [redacted] as a German who "ran with the intellectual crowd," but stated that he did not know [redacted] employment at that time or whether [redacted] was acquainted with the [redacted]

[redacted] described [redacted] as one of the early artists in the Communist movement but again he stated he did not specifically know whether [redacted] was acquainted with the [redacted]

b2  
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b7D

[redacted] stated that he did not recall persons named [redacted] or [redacted] as acquaintances of the [redacted] or as interested in Communist Party affairs. He stated that he knew DOROTHEA LANGE (TAYLOR), but did not know the extent of her acquaintance with the [redacted] if any. The name of [redacted] was not familiar to him.

[redacted] advised that he had no knowledge of the [redacted] employment in the middle 1930's or their places of residence.

[redacted] C.P. CALIF.

[redacted] has been reported as an acquaintance of the [redacted] since the 1930's, according to [redacted]

MR. & MRS.

CALIF.

SF 65-2427  
SF 65-4387

[redacted]  
[redacted]  
advised that he became acquainted with [redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

[redacted] recalled visiting [redacted]  
residence on two occasions. The date of the first occasion was not recalled,  
except that it was prior to the second visit [redacted]  
and was in the summertime. Apparently, therefore, the first visit was in  
the summer of either 1943, 1944, or 1945. The only persons present on this  
occasion were [redacted]

The second visit was recalled [redacted]  
when a dinner was held at [redacted] residence [redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

[redacted] the following persons as being present  
[redacted] [redacted]

Professor TAYLOR and wife (believed named DOT, formerly a  
photographer who was possibly once associated  
with "Life" Magazine, who had had an operation  
shortly before this affair.) (See DOROTHEA LANGE  
TAYLOR above);

The TAYLORS' teen-age son (name not recalled);

A young woman (name not recalled) from "Life" Magazine in  
San Francisco, [redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

SF 65-2427

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[redacted] advised that it was her belief that [redacted] were interested in news photography as distinguished from documentary photography.

[redacted] stated that their conversations with the [redacted] had been primarily concerning photography and [redacted] rather than on matters which would reveal the [redacted] attitude toward Communism or the Soviet Union. [redacted] stated that she had no reason to believe that the [redacted] were sympathetic toward Communism or the U.S.S.R.

[redacted] advised that when she first became acquainted with the [redacted] they were living separately, with [redacted] elsewhere in town, though she did not know where.

[redacted] advised that she did not know how [redacted] happened to become attached to "Life" Magazine, though possibly through [redacted] (see above), one of the original "Life" photographers.

[redacted] mentioned the following as to the known acquaintances of the [redacted]

CALIF

[redacted] of the "Time-Life", San Francisco

Office, [redacted]

[redacted] an acquaintance in the 1930's, a freelance photographer, later employed by "Life" Magazine.

DOROTHEA LANCE TAYLOR, mentioned above.

[redacted], employed by "Life" in San Francisco.

RE: [redacted]

In July, 1949, SF [redacted] reported that [redacted] who then was believed to be overseas, [redacted]

RE: [redacted]

CALIF

This person is possibly identical with [redacted] a known acquaintance of the [redacted] who has been interviewed and has advised that she knew of no Communist sympathy or activity on the part of the [redacted]